



MEDIA ADVISORY

Public Affairs Office
Commander, U.S. Fleet Forces
Command
1562 Mitscher Avenue,
Suite 250
Norfolk, Va. 23551-2487
(757) 836-3600

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Navy to Hold Public Meetings on Atlantic Fleet Training and Testing Draft EIS/OEIS

NORFOLK, Va. — The U.S. Navy encourages the public to attend an open house public meeting to learn about and provide comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement/Overseas Environmental Impact Statement (EIS/OEIS) for Navy training and testing activities conducted in the Atlantic Fleet Training and Testing (AFTT) Study Area.

The AFTT region covers approximately 2.6 million square nautical miles and encompasses the at-sea portions of Navy range complexes and research, development, testing and evaluation ranges along the Atlantic and Gulf coasts of the United States.

Public meetings are being held to inform the public about the Navy's Proposed Action and to obtain comments on the Draft EIS/OEIS and the adequacy and accuracy of the analysis. The public meetings are scheduled from 4 p.m. to 8 p.m., and will be conducted as an open house information session. Navy representatives will be available to provide information about the Proposed Action and address questions related to the Draft EIS/OEIS. Locally the meeting will be held:

Wednesday, June 6, 2012: Hilton Garden Inn Panama City, 1101 N. Highway 231, Panama City, Fla.

Navy Invites Public Comment

The Navy is accepting comments throughout the 60-day comment period, from May 11, 2012 to July 10, 2012. All comments must be postmarked or received by **July 10, 2012**, to be considered in the Final EIS/OEIS. Written comments may be submitted via the project website at

www.AFTTEIS.com or by mail to:

Naval Facilities Engineering Command Atlantic
Attn: Code EV22 (AFTT EIS Project Managers)
6506 Hampton Blvd.
Norfolk, VA 23508-1278

— more —

Copies of the Draft EIS/OEIS are available online or at one of following public libraries: Bay County Public Library, 898 West 11th St., Panama City, FL 32401; West Florida Public Library, Southwest Branch, 12248 Gulf Beach Hwy., Pensacola, FL 32507; and West Florida Public Library, Main Library, 200 W. Gregory St., Pensacola, FL 32502. Further details can be found at www.AFTTEIS.com.

The Navy proposes to conduct training and testing activities – which may include the use of active sonar and explosives – primarily within existing range complexes and testing ranges along the east coast of the United States, the Gulf of Mexico, Navy pierside locations, port transit channels, lower Chesapeake Bay, Narragansett Bay and St. Andrew Bay. The Proposed Action also includes activities such as sonar maintenance and gunnery exercises conducted concurrently with ship transits and which may occur outside Navy range complexes and testing ranges. The Proposed Action includes pierside sonar testing conducted as part of overhaul, modernization, maintenance and repair activities at shipyards and Navy piers, as well as new construction and overhaul at Navy-contracted shipbuilder locations.

The AFTT Draft EIS/OEIS updates the science and analyses needed to continue critical Navy training and testing in the Study Area. The Draft EIS/OEIS combines multiple previous studies into one, thereby incorporating expanded areas, and new science, platforms, and activities including ship shock testing on the east coast. Results from these studies show Navy activities continue to have negligible affects on marine mammal and turtle populations, including endangered species. Monitoring of Navy activities over the past several years supports these conclusions.

– USN –

MEDIA NOTE: A media availability will be held at the above location at 3:30 p.m. Wednesday, June 6. Media interested in attending or in need of additional information should contact Ms. Julie Ann Ripley, Environmental Media Officer at U.S. Fleet Forces Command at 910.381.8385 or julie.a.ripley@navy.mil.